The aim of these Wellbeing workshops is to help you learn more about stress and the steps which can be taken to help reduce the impact it can have on your life if left unchecked.

**What to expect at a workshop**

- The workshops are like lectures, there are **no** group discussions or people having to speak out in front of the group.
- If anyone is looking for more support than education on Stress Management there are contact numbers at the back of each workbook, where One to One support can be sought.
- There are four workshops in total each lasting two hours.
- You will be given a workbook for each workshop with some exercises.
- There will be time during the workshop to consider the exercises; however, it may be that you find it more useful to complete the exercises when you get home and have time to really think about your answers. We strongly suggest, to get the most from these workshops, that you do read the workbooks when you get home.
- Trainers may invite participants to give an example of stress but you don’t need to speak out if you don’t want to; it’s a general invitation to the whole group not to any individual.
- Monitoring information we gather cannot identify you and is simply for us to ensure we are reaching people.

If you have any questions please either write this down on a post-it (provided) and stick it on the board for us to read, or you can approach one of the presenters or their colleague directly.

In Session 4 we will look at **Problem Solving and Staying Well**. At this stage you may now be able to notice when your behaviour and your thinking are unhelpful, as well as noticing any bodily symptoms associated with stress.
* Exercise 1 *

How is life just now?

On the scale below where would you rate your quality of life this week?

0 _______________________________________________ 10

As bad as it could possibly be                               As good as it could possibly be

What is happening in your life that might be contributing to you feeling this way? Record the positive as well as the negative as it may be that you feel okay just now:
Where would you need to be on the scale, for your quality of life to be good enough?

0  _______________________________________________  10
As bad as it could possibly be  As good as it could possibly be

What would you be doing differently that would tell you that you had reached this point?
What is Worry?

An important thing to remember is that feeling / emotion largely comes from thought, so what’s going through your mind will affect how you feel. As human beings we are more likely to acknowledge how we feel (stressed, angry, sad, anxious etc) rather than identifying what we are thinking, for example, if you have money worries you can get caught up in the feeling of panic, fear and anxiety whereas if you can think “I need help to sort my money problem” and “where can you get help”, you go into problem solving mode which can help you to feel less emotionally stressed and more in control.

Worry is a **thought process driven by uncertainty or fear** which either helps us to get things done or which can overwhelm us. As covered in previous workshops, uncertainty and fear drive stress when having to deal with things like money problems, relationship problems, work problems, unemployment issues, illness and worry about others.

Worry is a chain of thoughts which usually make us anxious about future events, to which we then add judgements about our ability to cope with them and ourselves.

**IMPACT OF WORRY**

Worry will affect our behaviour in so far as we may do less (to avoid the stressful situation) or do more (to compensate for our worry). When worried our capacity to cope can be diminished and we may need to rely on others more often, rather than being able to cope on our own.

Worry also affects our thinking. When worried we tend to see more problems than there are and make life more difficult than it need be. We can even become problem focused jumping from one worry to the next. In this frame of mind it is certainly more difficult to make decisions and we can become pessimistic.
TACKLING WORRY

When you notice you are stressed ask yourself what is happening.

- When did the worry start?
- What triggered it this time?
- What’s so bad about it?
- What’s the worst that could possibly happen?

Now be more specific and ask yourself what you think will happen and how likely it is that it will happen. Please keep in mind the information from Session 1 about internal and external stressors – ask yourself, whether the things that you are worrying about external or internal? How much control do you have over this?

In Exercise 3 make a note of what you are worrying about and ask yourself what you can do about it.
* Exercise 3 *

Write down any things that are worrying you or problems you are facing at the moment.

These might be:

- Money related
- To do with where you are living
- Relationship difficulties
- Ill health – your own or someone else’s
- Others – anything at all that causes you to worry
When tackling our worries effectively we need to first notice that we are having worrying thoughts. Ask yourself is the thought realistic or likely to happen, and what you can do about the worry.

**Tackling Worry**

**Worrying thought**

Is the worry realistic or likely to happen? Can you do something about the worry?

- **Yes**
  - Use problem solving

- **No**
  - Tackle the thought, use distraction, relaxation
* Exercise 4 *

Look back at the worries you wrote down in Exercise 3. Think about each one:

IS THIS WORRY REALISTIC OR LIKELY TO HAPPEN? CAN YOU DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS WORRY? DO YOU HAVE MUCH CONTROL OVER IT?

Yes

No

Write your worries in either the **YES** column or **NO** column

USE PROBLEM SOLVING

TACKLE THE THOUGHT, USE DISTRACTION, RELAXATION
Problem Solving

If you feel overwhelmed with many stresses and worries, then it is useful to be able to break it all down into more manageable parts.

- Everyone at some point in their life has problems or worries
- Is there anyone that you trust or think may be able to help you?
- Can you talk to them about it?

Instead of thinking you cannot cope with all your worries, try tackling one at a time. It is better to deal with some worries than with none! Only tackle one problem at a time. Tackling too many problems at once is overwhelming for most people!

Start with the simplest or easiest problem first. If you are worried about how well your child is doing at school, or worried about your health, or getting to the shops before they close or what you will buy your partner for their birthday, then start with the easiest problem first.

Once you have broken your problems down you may find that a lot of them can be tackled one at a time.

REVIEW
THE SEVEN STEPS TO PROBLEM SOLVING

1. Make a list of the problems you have been worrying about.

2. Choose which one to tackle first, by arranging your list in order of difficulty and start with what you will find the easiest to tackle first.

3. State clearly and specifically what it is you want to do.

4. Make a list of options and look at the advantages and disadvantages of each one.

5. Choose a solution.

6. Plan the steps to carry it out.

7. Do it and review.
* Exercise 5 *

Seven Steps to Problem Solving

**Step 1.** Write a list of all the things you have been avoiding.

**Step 2.** From the list, choose ONE thing which you will tackle first.

_You could do this by arranging the list in order of difficulty. Start with the thing you will find easiest to tackle, and put the hardest things last._

Write your first (easiest) one here:
Step 3. Decide clearly what it is you would like to be able to do.

Give specific details about where, when and how you imagine yourself doing it and getting a positive outcome.
**Step 4.** Make a list of possible things you could do to help you achieve this.

In the table, write down your list of ideas to help you reach your goal. Be as creative as you like. This might include a list of any services that you may want to visit and explore if they can help you in anyway e.g. Citizens Advice, friend. Also write the Advantages and Disadvantages of each solution you have thought of.

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Step 5. Choose which solution you think is best. Write it here:

Step 6. Plan how you will carry this out. This may be just making a call to speak to someone about your problem to help find a solution or make an appointment.

Give specific details: dates, times, exactly what you will do – all the when’s, where’s and how’s.

Look out for little things which might get in your way at the time.

Step 7. Do it & review it

Make a note of how things went – what went well, what didn’t go so well, what you have gained from this experience and any ideas for next time.

Write your notes here:

Finished! – Well done for using the 7 Step approach to problem solving successfully to the end. Use the same 7 Step technique to tackle any other problems you want to solve.
Remember

IF IT WENT WELL

- Acknowledge it and reward yourself
- Share your success with friends and family
- Use the same plan to deal with any other problem that comes along

IF IT DIDN’T GO SO WELL

- Do not be put off
- There may be good reasons why this approach didn’t work
- Go back to the list of suggestions and choose another solution
FUTURE PROBLEMS

- Face problems that lie in the future
- Don’t just worry about the problems – work out how you are going to deal with them
- Never just wait to see what happens – take control
- Don’t leave things to chance – think and plan ahead
What About Worries You Can’t Do Anything About?

What to Do When You Can’t Change Things

As has been covered earlier, uncertainty and fear can lead to stress. You may be worried about being unemployed or losing your job, about someone close to you being ill or about money and bills. These issues may seem impossible to tackle owing to the level of uncertainty involved. Again, ask yourself, “is it an internal or external stress, can I do something about it or not?”

Uncertainty is difficult to handle when the situation is uncontrollable and when you cannot predict what will happen.

As a general rule **do what you can and then deal with your reactions to uncertainty.**

- Recognise your uncertainty
- Limit the problem
- Are you the only one?
- If you can, keep a regular daily routine
- Be reasonably selfish – deal with your own problem first
- Do not withdraw from enjoyable activities
- Talk to someone else about the problem
- Take the pressure off – do something you enjoy, e.g. relaxation
SOME TIPS TO HELP YOU TACKLE WORRY

- The 5 year rule
  - Will it really matter in 5 years?
- The whole picture
  - Are you looking at the bigger picture?
- The calculator
  - How much worry is the situation worth?

- Ban yourself from worrying about the unimportant

- Crowd your worries out
  - Keep yourself busy or keep your mind busy with other things
    - But do not use this as a way of avoiding the task of problem solving

- Ban night time worry
  - At night worries tend to get out of all proportion
  - Tell yourself this is not the time to worry
  - Use relaxation
  - If a worry comes into your head then write it down and deal with it in the morning
Summary

- Worry is a chain of unhelpful thoughts about the future
- These thoughts can be unlikely or unrealistic
- Develop a plan for what can be changed
- Accept what cannot be changed

Staying Well

The workshops have highlighted **what stress is** and **ways it can be tackled**. Life can be stressful but applying the problem solving techniques in this series of workshops will support you to tackle stress and to take steps to addressing worries. The following diagram highlights the cycle of stress and what you can do to overcome it. The more aware you are of your thoughts, feelings, bodily symptoms and behaviour, the more likely you are to be able to tackle stress.
At the beginning of each session we asked you to mark on ‘the scale of change’, a scale from 0 to 10, to rate your quality of life. Continue to use this scale to make plans to get you to the next point on the scale and to review where you are. Ask yourself what has changed that got you to that point.

When you are thinking about what to do to move up a point, make sure your goals are realistic and take one step at a time no matter how small.

0 _______________________________________________ 10
As **bad** as it could possibly be                        As **good** as it could possibly be
Set-backs

If you notice that you are struggling to move up the scale, that is OK. We all suffer set backs in life which can seem insurmountable. Applying your learning at those times may help.

Remember that progress is not always smooth or easy and set-backs are common. Try to identify those situations which trigger your stress and explore ways of addressing it using the techniques suggested in these workshops.

Don’t panic if you have a set-back. Set-backs are natural and you just need to work out what you can do about it and how you can approach things differently the next time.

A set-back doesn’t mean that you are back to square one. Use the scale of change to work out what has changed and why this may have caused you to move back. Look at what you need to put back into place to get you back to where you were.
WHAT IF I AM SLIPPING DOWN THE SCALE?

Watch out for early warning signs:

- Bodily symptoms e.g. tension
- Unhelpful behaviour e.g. avoidance
- Unhelpful thinking e.g. catastrophising
- How you feel e.g. stressed

What to do:

- Review your plans
- Put what you have learned into practice
- Have an emergency plan e.g. you may have an agreement with someone who you can phone at any time if you really don’t feel you are coping – you could use this as a last resort or use your list of helpline numbers
- Seek additional support
  - Talk to people around you – you don’t have to cope on your own
  - Don’t withdraw from those around you as support is important if you are experiencing stress
Here are other services you may find of use if you need additional advice or support.

**Help Lines/Support**

**General**

- **Samaritans**: 08457 90 90 90 (24hr) or 0141 248 4488 (09:30–22:00)
- **Breathing Space**: 0800 83 85 87
- **NHS 24**: 08454 24 24 24
- **Stress Watch**: 01563 574 144
- **Support Line**: 020 8554 9004, www.supportline.org.uk
- **Living Life To The Full**: www.livinglifetothefull.com
- **Mood Juice**: www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk
- **CALM**: 0800 585858
- **Your GP, health visitor**

**Specific**

- **Alcoholics Anonymous**: 0845 769 7555 or 0141 339 8884
- **Carers Scotland**: 0808 808 7777, www.carersscotland.org
- **Citizens Advice Bureaux (debt, housing etc)**: 0870 290 3000
- **Cruse Bereavement**: 01738 444 178
- **Glasgow Housing Association**: 0849 001 001
- **Men’s Aid**: 0871 2239 986, www.mensaid.com
- **Miscarriage Association**: 01924 298 834
- **Money Matters**: 0141 445 5221, www.moneymattersweb.co.uk
- **Parentline Scotland**: 0808 800 2222
- **Scottish Women’s Aid**: 0141 553 2022, www.scottishwomensaid.org.uk
- **Social Work**: 0141 287 8700, 0800 811 505 (emergency line)
7 Steps to Managing Stress

Life can be a challenge and that’s a fact. The more we care for ourselves the more able we are to meet those challenges without feeling too stressed or overwhelmed. This doesn’t mean we won’t get overwhelmed at times, but if we incorporate steps to managing stress into our daily routine, it might just help.

The following are the 7 steps to managing stress which is part of the stress management support at the partner agencies. See if you can introduce these into your life and remember if things are getting to you then speak to someone.

Keep stimulants to a minimum
Stay away from excessive amounts of tea, coffee, fizzy drinks with high caffeine levels and alcohol.

Drink at least 2 litres of water a day
Drink water or diluted juice from morning to evening this is important to keep your body hydrated.

Eat a healthy balanced diet
Eat 3 meals a day never missing breakfast and have fruit or vegetables or fruit juice with every meal.
Take time to relax every day

Listen to a relaxation CD or relaxing music every day. Practice slow, regular breathing techniques. Breathe in for 3 seconds and breathe out for 3 seconds to reduce respirations to 10 respirations a minute, which is a relaxed breathing rate. Use the second hand on a clock or watch until you get comfortable with how long 3 seconds is.

Take regular exercise be active

Do some sort of exercise or activity at least 3 times a week. Walking, swimming or even housework would count, anything which keeps you active.

Ideally you should be aiming for 10,000 steps a day, buy a pedometer and check your activity levels.

If you have not been active for a while, it is advisable to seek medical advice before starting any exercise regime.

Have fun on a regular basis

Make an effort to have fun if you haven’t in a while. Watch a funny video; go out with people who make you laugh, smile just for the fun of it. With practice it will be effortless to have fun.

If something or someone is bothering you do something about it

If someone or something has upset you and you are holding onto this deal with it, don’t just ignore it and allow it to fester.

We hope you have found this series of workshops useful, best wishes the training team and all their partners 😊
COPE
COPE offer a professional confidential service to individuals aged 16 and over experiencing mental or emotional distress. Due to demand we are beginning to deliver in other locations full details are on the website www.cope-scotland.org or phone 0141 944 5490 or visit 20 Drumchapel Rd G15 6QE.

Lifelink
Lifelink works with young people and adults, offering a range of support to deal with stress, personal problems and emotional distress. The service is free and confidential and offered in various locations throughout Glasgow, please see most up to date info on our website www.Lifelink.org.uk or call 0141 552 4434.
(Lifelink is the trading name for Royston Stress Centre. A registered Scottish charity No. SC025643)

Primary Care Mental Health Team
We are an NHS service, offering help to adults experiencing common psychological problems, like stress, anxiety and depression. We offer different kinds of help, including courses, groups, and one-to-one therapies. The service has no upper age limit. The teams are based in Partick and Woodside, but we see clients in a range of venues throughout West Glasgow. For people with GPs in West Glasgow, you can ring and make an appointment on 0141 232 9279. For people with GPs in Woodside and Maryhill, you can see your GP and ask for a referral.

If you would like to know more about up and coming workshops or services near you, which could help you manage stress, please make contact with any of these agencies.